

North Kingstown Free Library
Three-Year Technology Plan
2002-2004



October 2001

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MISSION STATEMENT/TECHNOLOGY VISION

In its continuing mission to meet the informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs of the community, the North Kingstown Free Library seeks to provide its patrons with collections and services which take full advantage of technological resources. Technological resources, which deliver both information and services, are an integral part of basic library service in North Kingstown. To ensure a continuing high quality of service, the North Kingstown Free Library will commit a substantial amount of its budgetary and staff resources to planning, developing, and implementing technology at this institution.

OVERVIEW

The North Kingstown Free Library has made an increasing commitment over the past ten years, in funds and in staff resources, to integrating technology into its overall mission to meet the needs of its patrons. In these ten years, we have seen fundamental changes in the way the Library operates and delivers service to the community. The card catalog has been replaced by an online catalog. Reference databases, full-text magazine articles, newspapers, and many other resources are now available to our patrons over the Internet 24 hours a day. Patrons receive e-mail and automated telephone notification of overdues and reserves. Patrons may renew and reserve materials electronically in the library or from their home computers. They can also request answers to reference questions by sending e-mail to the reference staff. The availability of service is no longer limited to the walls of the library during the 66 hours a week that the library is open.

Technology will continue to have a tremendous impact on library service as we move further into the twenty-first century. In order to ensure that our patrons have access to the tools they will need to live their lives in an automated society as well as the skills to use those tools, we need to take a proactive role in creating an information-literate community. We will do this by developing initiatives that will seek to meet goals in four areas: establishing and promoting the role of our library in a technologically advanced society, developing staff resources, educating our patrons in how to use and evaluate information resources, and building a technological infrastructure.

An important factor in developing technological resources at the North Kingstown Free Library is the document outlining Minimum Standards for R.I. Public Libraries adopted by the Library Board of Rhode Island September 18, 2000. This document includes at least twelve standards, which are technology-related. In order to meet minimum standards, every Rhode Island public library must: make its holdings known to library users statewide (standard 4); provide assistive technology and software as needed (standard 7); provide reference service over the Internet (standard 9); provide access to electronic resources (standard 10); provide equipment, training, and guidance for the public to access, print, and copy information available through the library's resources, including electronic resources (standard 11); support the staff's continuing education and professional activities (standard 18); give the staff access to Internet mail, give the staff the opportunity to learn to use new equipment and technology, provide at least one computer dedicated for staff use only (standard 21); be a member of CLAN (standard 37); initiate cooperation with local schools, coordinating homework support and literacy activities (standard

39); make public relations information available on the Web (standard 44); provide a library building that supports current and emerging telecommunications and electronic information technologies (standard 48). The North Kingstown Free Library meets, or exceeds each of these standards.

TECHNOLOGY AT THE NORTH KINGSTOWN FREE LIBRARY

MEMBERSHIPS

Cooperating Libraries Automated Network (CLAN)

The North Kingstown Free Library belongs to the **Cooperating Libraries Automated Network (CLAN)**, the consortium of public libraries in Rhode Island. As a member of CLAN, we share an online catalog with 48 other public libraries that gives our patrons access to more than 3.5 million items. CLAN members share a software platform whose features include circulation, cataloging, inter-library loan, and access to the CLAN online catalog. We are able to use CLAN servers to host our library home page on the World-Wide-Web and to host our external e-mail accounts. In addition, as members of CLAN, we have access to a wealth of human resources—technical support personnel with advanced expertise in technology issues, professional catalogers who maintain the shared database, and a network of colleagues who share information and experience on a wide variety of library issues.

Ocean State Higher Education, Economic Development & Administrative Network (OSHEAN)

Through CLAN, the North Kingstown Free Library belongs to OSHEAN, a non-profit consortium formed to foster the development of a communications infrastructure to provide high-speed network access to enhance the ability of Rhode Islanders to gain access to electronic information. OSHEAN provides us with our high-speed (T-1, ATM) connection to the Internet.

Library of Rhode Island (LORI)

The North Kingstown Free Library is a member of LORI, the multi-type statewide library network administered by the R.I. Office of Library and Information Services to foster and facilitate resource sharing and cooperation among the state's libraries and library personnel.

Town of North Kingstown Wide Area Network and Finance System

As a municipal department, the North Kingstown Free Library has access to the Town of North Kingstown Wide Area Network and Finance System for the purpose of conducting budget, finance, and payroll functions and for sharing information and resources with other town departments.

HARDWARE PLATFORM

Local Area Network

We have a 50-node *Windows NT* Local Area Network (LAN), installed in January 1998, with 46 computers currently connected (29 for the public; 17 for the staff). The LAN is powered by a Dell Power-Edge Network server with three 9GB hard drives running NT4.0 and Microsoft Exchange Server. The server has a Seagate built-in backup tape drive. Connected to the LAN server are two 5-bay Dakota CD ROM servers each with hard drives that have enough capacity to image and store CD ROMs as well as share software and data across the network.

Telecommunications

We have three external telecommunications connections. A 56K phone line connects us to the CLAN central site at Providence Public Library using a Bay Networks router. A T-1 ATM line connects us to the Internet through OSHEAN using a Cisco router. A fiber optic connection connects us to the Town of North Kingstown wide area network and finance system using a separate router specifically for fiber optic connections. The fiber optic router and the Cisco router are connected to the Bay Networks router which is the main telecommunications point in our configuration. Three 24-port switches, configured with cascade modules to act as one virtual switch, connect our networked computers to the telecommunications equipment.

Computer Workstations for the Public

We have twenty-nine Dell systems (10 for young readers, 19 for adults) connected to our LAN with the following hardware specifications:

- Dimension and Optiplex models
- 350MHz to 866 MHz processing speed
- 64-256MB RAM
- 9GB to 20GB hard drives
- Windows 98, Windows 98SE, or Windows 2000 operating system

We have five Dell systems (2 for young readers, 3 for adults) not connected to our LAN. They deliver service that allows patrons to use the floppy and cd rom drives and to save data on the workstations. They have the following hardware specifications:

- Dimension models
- 266 MHz processing speed
- 64 MB RAM
- 5GB to 9GB hard drives
- Windows 95 operating system

Peripheral Equipment for the Public

We have four network laser printers (two for adults and two for young readers)

- Two HP LaserJet 1100's
- One HP LaserJet 5P
- One HP LaserJet 6P

We have five local printers connected to individual public workstations (four for adults and one for young readers)

- Three HP LaserJet 1100's
- One HP DeskJet 600
- One HP DeskJet 842C

Equipment for Public Presentations including Training Sessions for Patrons and Staff

We have twelve computer systems, used as a roving computer lab, for teaching technology classes to the public and the staff, with the following specifications:

- A variety of clone workstations and Dell systems
- 8MB RAM to 64MB RAM
- Windows 95 and Windows 98 operating system
- An 8-port switch that allows us to connect to the Internet for hands-on training in the use of our electronic resources and the Internet

We have two Dell laptop computers, one of which is used exclusively for teaching technology classes and other public presentations and one that is used both for presentations and as a staff workstation, with the following specifications:

- Latitude and Inspiron models
- 128-256MB RAM
- 5-10GB hard drive
- Windows 98 or Windows 2000 operating system

We have one Epson video projector for connection to laptops or desktop computer systems for public presentations with computer content

Computer Workstations for the Staff

We have seventeen Dell systems connected to our LAN with the following hardware specifications:

- Dimension and Optiplex models
- 350MHz to 866 MHz processing speed
- 64-256MB RAM
- 9GB to 20GB hard drives
- Running either Windows 98, Windows 98SE, or Windows 2000 operating system

We have three Dell systems not connected to our LAN, for use as backup workstations, and for testing and troubleshooting, with the following hardware specifications:

- Dimension and Optiplex models
- 350MHz to 866 MHz processing speed
- 64-256MB RAM
- 9GB to 20GB hard drives
- Running either Windows 98, Windows 98SE, or Windows 2000 operating system

Peripheral Equipment for the Staff

We have one network laser printer for the staff, to which a number of staff computers in support services and administration are connected

- HP LaserJet 6P

We have eleven local printers connected to individual staff machines

- One HP LaserJet 1100 (shared by two computers at the Young Readers desk)
- One HP Color LaserJet 4500
- Eight HP DeskJet 600, 710, 842, 892,
- One Okidata serial printer

We have three receipt printers at the circulation desk to print receipts for patrons of their circulation transactions

- Two Epson TMU300PD
- One Omniprint OM200

We have four laser barcode scanners for use at the circulation desk and in support services

- Four Symbol LS4000 laser barcode scanners for staff use

We have two HP ScanJet scanners for staff use

- One ScanJet 6300C
- One ScanJet 5P

ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES

We offer our patrons a wide range of electronic information resources—both in the library and remotely—through paid subscriptions to online databases and other online reference resources, through links to staff-selected web sites, and through cd-rom based resources. These resources are accessible through the library home page and also through staff-designed menus on computers inside the library. Not every computer has available the same menu of resources. The decision to include a resource on a menu at a particular workstation is based upon the audience of the resource, the availability of staff to assist patrons using the computers, and the area of the library where the computer is located. Most, but not all resources, are available outside the library to patrons at home, at school, or at their offices.

CLAN Online Catalog

- A listing of the collections of every Rhode Island public library
- Available on 28 public computers and all staff computers in the library
- Available remotely to patrons outside the library through a Web interface or a telnet application
- Access is paid for through CLAN membership fees

Online Resource Centers: Student Resource Center, Biography Resource Center, and Literature Resource Center

- Research databases that gather information from books, magazines, reference books, and web resources in an easy-to-use search and retrieval tool. These databases provide full-text of many magazines and newspapers as well as primary documents and images. Aimed at students from junior high through college and also helpful for adults doing research.
- Available on 26 public computers and all staff computers in the library
- Available remotely from home, school, or office to North Kingstown CLAN card holders
- Access is paid for through town and state grant-in-aid funds

Online Reference Databases: General Reference Center, Ebsco MasterFile, And Electric Library

- Reference databases that provide access to articles in magazines, newspapers, television and radio transcripts. Many of the articles are available full-text.
- Available on 22 public computers and all staff computers in the library
- Available remotely from home, school, or office to North Kingstown CLAN card holders
- Access is paid for through town and state grant-in-aid funds

Online Subject Databases: Health Reference Center, Magill on Literature, and PoemFinder

- Reference databases that provide access to information on specific subjects. Much of the information is available in full-text.
- Available on 22 public computers and all staff computers in the library
- Health Reference Center and Magill on Literature are available remotely from home, school, or office to North Kingstown CLAN card holders
- Access is paid for through town and state grant-in-aid funds

Online Databases for Reading Resources: Novelist and What Do I Read Next?

- Databases that provide access to recommended titles, plot summaries, and award winning books with searching capability by genre, subject, author, title, and age range of readers
- Available on 24 public computers and all staff computers in the library
- Available remotely from home, school, or office to North Kingstown CLAN card holders
- Access is paid for through town and state grant-in-aid funds

Online Homework Help for Young Readers: Searchasaurus, Ebsco Topic Search, and Ebsco Animals

- Databases designed for elementary school-age children to help them with homework assignments
- Available on 9 public computers and all staff computers in the library
- Available remotely from home, school, or office to CLAN card holders
- Access is provided through the Providence Public Library's Homework Helpers project

Online Encyclopedia: World Book Encyclopedia

- The online version of this popular encyclopedia
- Available on 22 public computers and all staff computers in the library
- Access is paid for through town and state grant-in-aid funds

Providence Journal Archives Online

- Access to articles published in the Providence Journal since 1983, written by Providence Journal writers
- Available on 22 public computers and all staff computers in the library
- Access is paid for through town and state grant-in-aid funds

Internet Access

- Full access to the Internet is available on 6 computers in the Adult Reference Dept. and 4 computers in the Young Readers Dept. (filtered by CyberPatrol)
- Available on all staff computers
- Access provided through CLAN membership fees

Ebsco MasterFile on CD ROM Available on twelve computers in the Reference Dept.

- Backup of online service, updated twice annually
- Available on 22 public computers and all staff computers in the library
- Access is paid for as part of our Ebsco Masterfile online subscription

New York Times backfiles on CD ROM

- Access to articles, many full-text from the New York Times, 1992-2000
- Available on one non-networked computer in the Adult Reference Dept.

Reading and Learning CD ROMs for preschoolers

- A changing menu of titles available on the computer in the library's preschool room
- Purchased through town funds and a grant from the ARCH corporation

Genealogy CD ROMS: New England and Historical Genealogical Register, 1847-1994 and Family Tree Maker's Family Archives-Vital Records: Rhode Island, 1500's-1900's

- Available on the networked computer in the South County Room
- Purchased through town funds and also through funds donated by the North Kingstown Genealogical Society

OTHER ELECTRONIC SERVICES

Word Processing Services for the Public

- MS Office '97 word processing software is available on two standalone (non-networked) computers in the Reference Dept. and on two standalone (non-networked) computers in the Young Readers Dept.

Information Literacy Initiatives

- Online tutorials on using the CLAN online catalog, our electronic information resources, and the Internet are available by appointment with a library staff member
- Technology Nites classes are offered throughout the year in basic word processing skills and other topics geared toward the novice adult computer user
- Public programs promoting our electronic information resources are held regularly for a variety of audiences and age groups

OFFICE SOFTWARE USED BY THE LIBRARY STAFF

The library staff uses a wide range of office software for administration, public relations, and communication

MS Excel Spreadsheet software

- Used to draft and maintain the library budget, to create lists of AV holdings which are printed quarterly for the public, to compile library statistics, to index obituaries from the local newspaper, The Standard Times, to maintain the staff leave request calendar, to print lists of magazine holdings, and to print various bibliographies and other lists of collection resources

MS Word Processing software

- Used to write letters, administrative reports, and a variety of public relations and publicity documents

MS Access Database software

- Used to maintain a database of magazine subscriptions and to maintain the Friends of the Library membership database

MS Outlook Calendar and E-mail software

- Used to maintain calendars of bookings for the meeting room, the conference room, and library display space
- Used to send and receive internal and external e-mail, to maintain other administrative information such as a shared list of vendors with whom the library does business

Design and Presentation software: Ms Publisher, Adobe Pagemaker, MS Front Page, and MS Power Point

- Used to develop brochures that promote library services, to publish the quarterly Fiction newsletter, the quarterly Young Readers newsletter, the monthly newsletter, Among Friends, flyers and handouts publicizing library programs, designing and maintaining the library home page and its various components, developing and presenting public programs, and developing and presenting training programs for the staff

GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

The following goals, objectives, and strategies address four key issues: solidifying the role of the library as a “community gateway” to technology resources, developing human resources, educating the public, and building a technological infrastructure. These goals, objectives, and strategies are intended to provide a framework for developing more specific plans each fiscal year that will be incorporated into the annual service plans drafted by the administration and approved by the Board of Trustees.

Goal 1: To solidify the role of the library as a “community gateway” to the technology resources that people need to live their lives in the 21st century

Objective: Continue the practice of using the North Kingstown Free Library home page as a means of delivering service both inside and outside the library

Strategy: Evaluate the design and functionality of the home page and its various components at least once a year, using statistical measurements on the use of the home page, feedback from users, examples of other library home pages, accessibility standards, information about web design, and input from the staff. 2002-2004

Strategy: Continue offering e-mail reference service through the home page. 2002-2004

Strategy: Mount the local Standard-Times obituary index on the home page, making it searchable to users inside and outside the library. 2002

Strategy: Develop a long-range plan for converting other in-house indexes and finding aids to spreadsheets or databases that could be mounted on the library home page, providing access to these valuable tools beyond the walls of the library building. 2002

Strategy: Implement the long-range plan for index conversion. 2003- 2004

Strategy: Investigate other services and information about the library that could be delivered over the home page, implementing those that meet our overall goals and mission of library service in the town. 2002-2004

Objective: Ensure the viability of the electronic resources collection

Strategy: Write a collection development policy for electronic collection resources that will address the evaluation and management of all aspects of electronic collections including, but not limited to, such issues as archiving, licensing, cost, access, redundancy among electronic vendors, audience, subject need, ease of use. 2002

Strategy: Establish and implement an ongoing evaluation process for electronic collections based on parameters outlined in the collection development policy. The evaluation would take place each year in the spring. 2002-2004

Objective: Utilize technology to preserve and make more widely accessible our valuable special collections

Strategy: Develop a long-range plan to identify and prioritize special collections items that would be particularly good candidates to be converted to machine-readable format through digitizing and/or scanning. 2002

Strategy: Implement the long-range plan for digitizing and scanning special collections materials. 2002-2004

Strategy: Investigate ways to make the scanned and digitized images and text available and searchable beyond the walls of the library. 2003-2004

Objective: Provide patrons with the widest range of computer services possible within the parameters of a public library setting

Strategy: Conduct an annual review of computer services to evaluate the services we offer, and to determine what additional services, if any, we should be offering. 2002-2004

Strategy: Continue to make as many databases as possible available remotely to our patrons. 2002-2004

Strategy: Continue to participate in statewide initiatives regarding database licensing. 2002-2004

Strategy: Continue our commitment to providing barrier-free services to patrons with disabilities by investigating hardware and software that enhances accessibility for this service group. 2002-2004

Objective: Encourage responsible use of Internet resources

Strategy: Review annually our established policies and procedures regarding patron use of the Internet. This review would take place each year in the autumn. 2002-2004.

Strategy: Develop initiatives—programs, brochures, and publicity—to encourage children and their parents to explore the Internet as a family activity. 2002-2004

Strategy: Stay informed about legislative initiatives which seek to regulate the use of Internet resources in libraries and develop institutional positions on these initiatives as required. 2002-2004

Goal 2: To develop human resources, through recruitment, training, and professional development that will ensure staff proficiency in delivering a wide range of services in an ever-changing technology landscape

Objective: Strengthen our established in-house training program for staff

Strategy: Develop and implement an annual schedule of formal training sessions (small group and individual) on topics that will help the staff manage their use of technology, both existing and emerging. 2002-2004

Strategy: Encourage the sharing of information and skills among the staff on an informal basis. 2002-2004

Strategy: Continue the established practice of encouraging self-directed learning of new computer skills. 2002-2004

Strategy: Establish a framework for documenting staff proficiency. 2002

Objective: Strengthen our commitment to support our technology program with staff members that have significant expertise in the area of technology

Strategy: Review staff responsibilities with regard to technology issues to determine the optimum commitment of staff resources—staff hours, salary, position in the staff hierarchy—and work with the trustees and town and union officials to implement any recommended changes. 2002

Strategy: Establish a practice of sending technology staff members to at least one workshop, course, or training opportunity annually. 2002-2004

Strategy: Support Local 1033 efforts to revise library staff job descriptions to include mention of technology. 2002-2004

Strategy: Continue our commitment to filling vacated staff positions with individuals who have experience with computers. 2002-2004

Strategy: Encourage graduate library school students with specific interests in technology use in libraries to consider our library for professional field experiences. 2002-2004

Objective: Utilize outside resources for training and education in technology issues

Strategy: Continue our strong relationship with CLAN technology support personnel. 2002-2004

Strategy: Make a regular practice of checking CLAN mail and checking the CLAN support page and the LORI home page for information and advice regarding current issues. 2002-2004

Strategy: Take advantage of continuing education opportunities offered by the R.I. Office of Library and Information Services, the URI Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, and the Rhode Island Library Association. 2002-2004

Strategy: Read mainstream computer magazines and consult computer websites regularly to keep abreast of emerging technology issues. 2002-2004

Strategy: Rely on our computer systems maintenance provider for advice and assistance in learning about technology and its uses. 2002-2004

Strategy: Maintain a good working relationship with town MIS personnel. 2002-2004

Goal 3: To provide an ongoing education program for the public in the use of technology

Objective: To strengthen our Information Literacy initiatives, ensuring that all our patrons have the knowledge and skills necessary to use electronic resources

Strategy: Continue our established practice of offering one-on-one tutorials for adults in using electronic resources. 2002-2004

Strategy: Develop a series of public programs, at least two annually, that would provide hands-on use of specific electronic resources. 2002-2004

Strategy: Develop ways to teach children and young adults how to use electronic resources that would be particularly appealing to these age groups. 2002-2004

Strategy: Develop FAQ sheets and procedural brochures that would explain the basics of how to use electronic resources. 2002-2004

Objective: To offer educational opportunities for our patrons to learn basic computer skills

Strategy: Continue our popular "Technology Nites" classes in basic word processing and basic Windows operations. 2002-2004

Strategy: Evaluate patron needs for further educational opportunities by doing regular surveys. 2002-2004

Strategy: Investigate inventive ways of presenting educational opportunities such as online tutorials, cd-rom based programs that could be borrowed by patrons. 2002-2004

Objective: To strengthen our relationship with the schools

Strategy: Continue our established practice of offering presentations about our technology resources to North Kingstown teachers. 2002-2004

Strategy: Work with school librarians to offer workshops to students, teachers, and librarians about using specific electronic information resources. 2002-2004

Objective: To coordinate efforts with other North Kingstown public libraries

Strategy: Discuss technology issues and plans with other North Kingstown public libraries at the Library Council meetings twice a year that are mandated by the Minimum Standards for Rhode Island Public Libraries. 2002-2004

Goal 4: To build an efficient and secure technological infrastructure to support our technology goals and objectives

Objective: Provide adequate hardware resources for current and future applications

Strategy: Review our hardware platform with CLAN network administrative staff and technical support personnel and our computer systems maintenance provider on an annual basis and implement their recommendations for upgrading and replacing system hardware. 2002-2004

Strategy: Continue to implement our established schedule of hardware replacement. 2002-2004

Strategy: Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of running our own Web server for hosting our web page and e-mail. 2002-2003

Objective: Protect our system resources

Strategy: Be vigilant about virus protection making sure we have up-to-date virus definitions and a recent version of virus scanning software. 2002-2004

Strategy: Implement our technology schedule for downloading critical updates and conducting regular housekeeping chores on system resources. 2002-2004

Strategy: Develop an MS Access database of system resources that would allow us to maintain a comprehensive inventory of these resources, and to sort and review information regarding specifications, maintenance coverage, maintenance history, upgrades to software, etc. 2002

Strategy: Evaluate our maintenance contracts for computer resources on an annual basis and recommend a maintenance program for the coming fiscal year. Evaluation to be conducted in the spring of each calendar year. 2002-2004

Objective: Provide an adequate software platform for the staff to perform library service, and all other internal office, graphics, and Web-related services

Strategy: Cooperate fully with CLAN to implement whatever software upgrades are necessary for the continuing viability of library operations. 2002-2004

Strategy: Review annually the software we use to determine if we need to upgrade or replace a particular software platform with an alternative platform. 2002-2004

FUNDING

The library will continue to use a number of funding sources to implement the goals, objectives, and strategies of the technology plan. These include town budget funds, state grant-in-aid funds, Champlin Foundation grants, North Kingstown Free Library Corporation funds, and funds from other grant-making institutions where available and appropriate.

PLAN EVALUATION

The objectives and strategies of this three-year technology plan will be included, in greater detail and with specific timetables, in the library's annual plan of service. Since we review our annual plan of service on a quarterly basis, reporting our progress to the Board of Trustees, the technology initiatives will be a part of this progress report. Additionally, we will review and revise the three-year plan each year, in November, to ensure that the plan is forward-looking and that it responds always to new developments in the technology field.